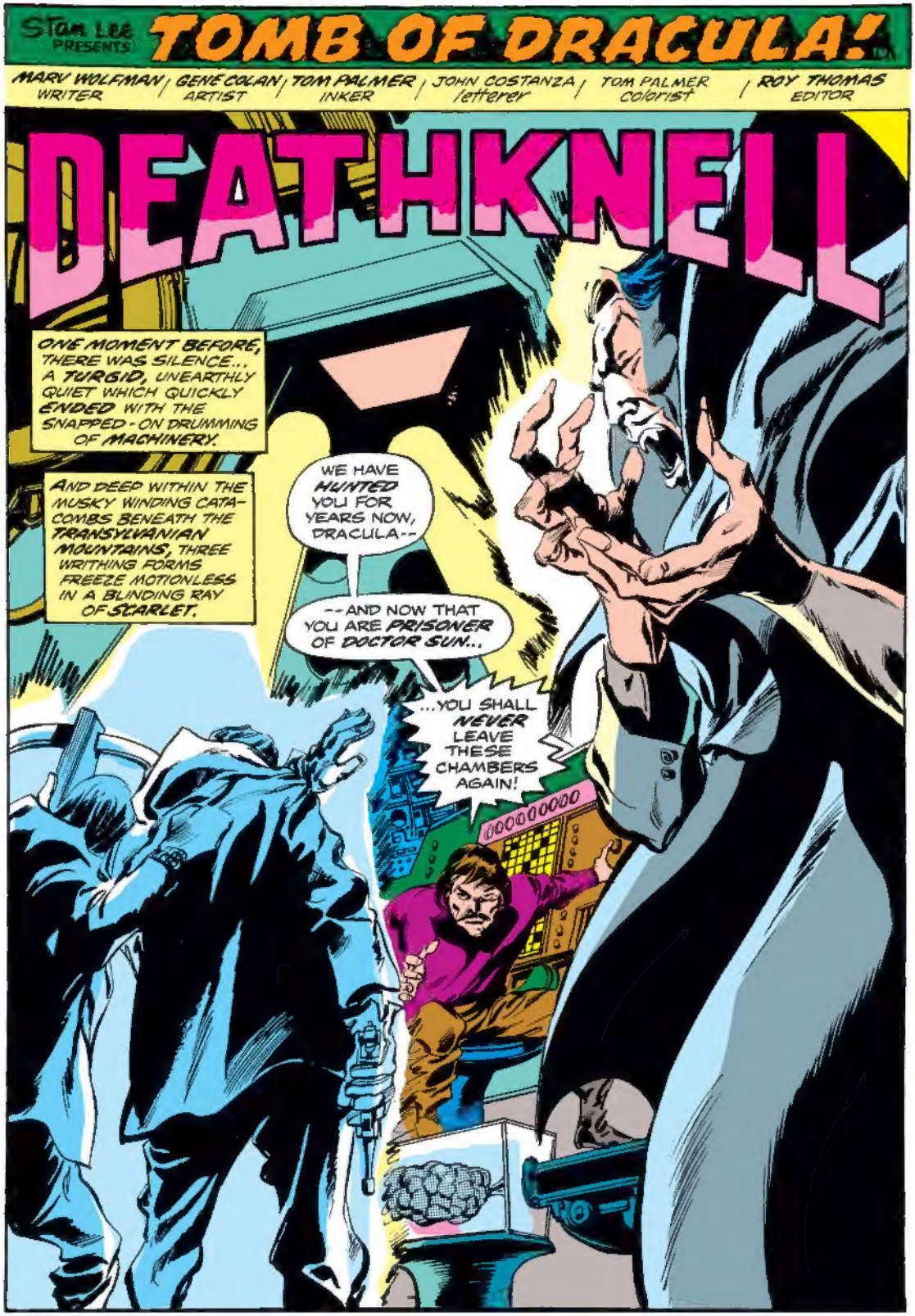
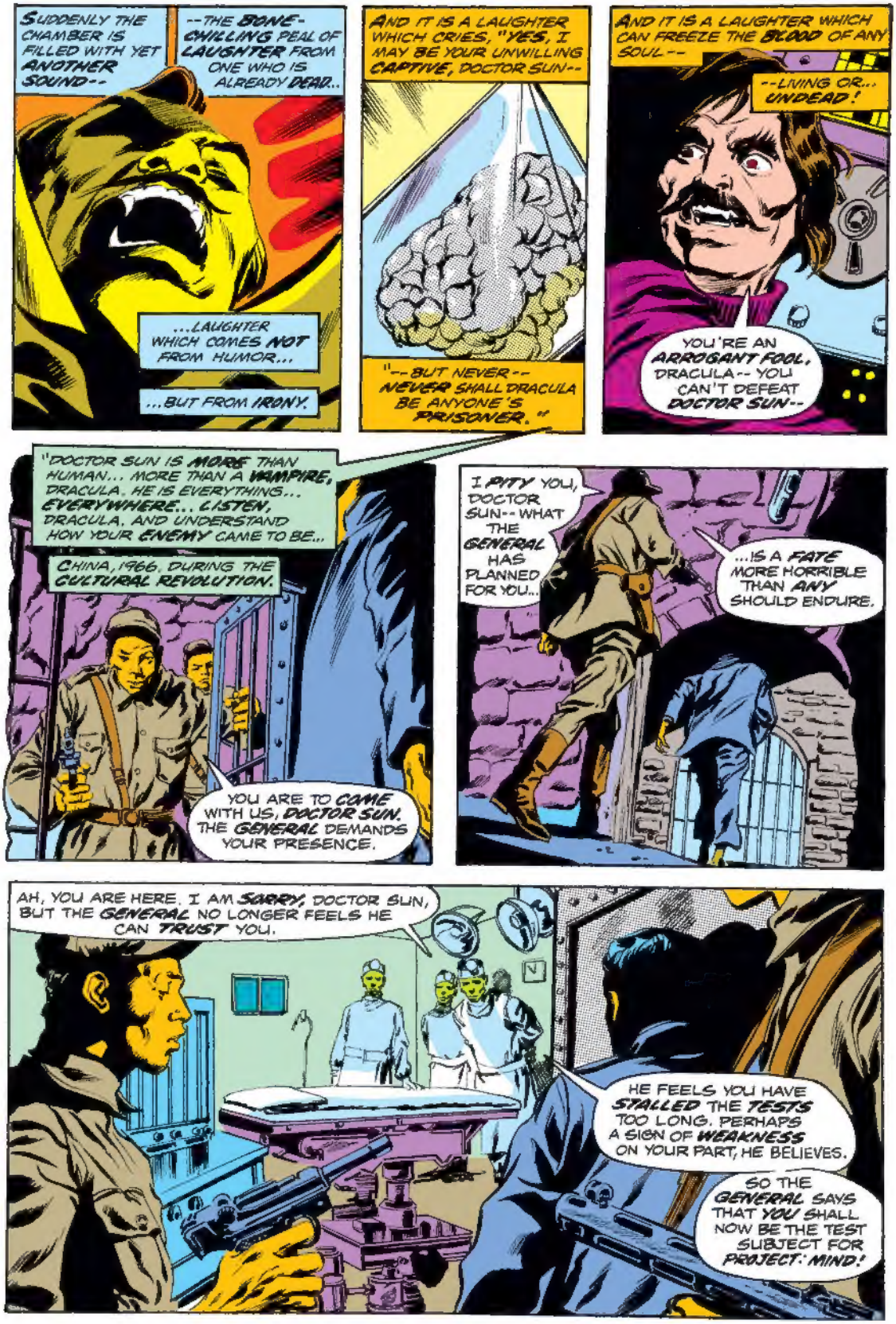
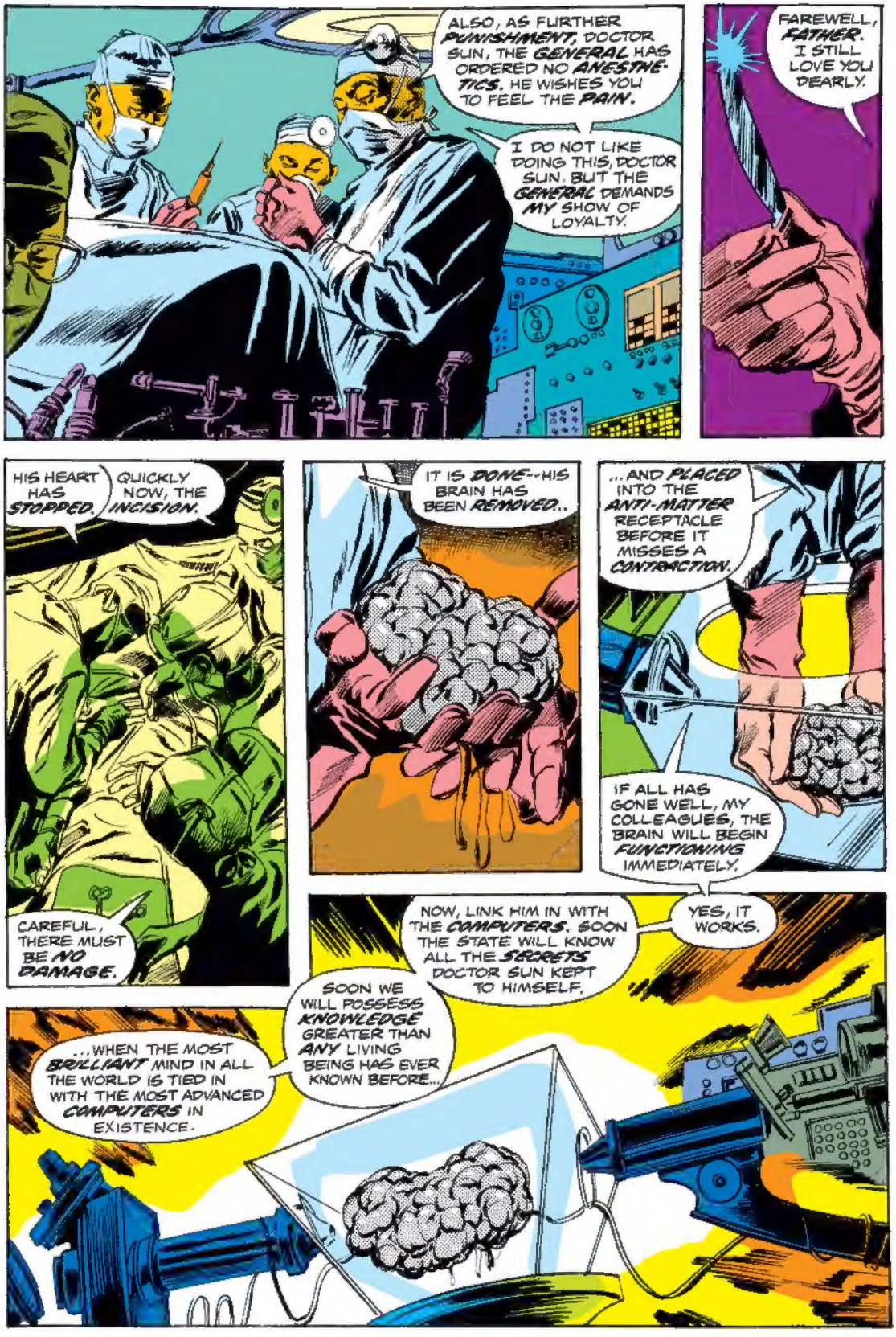
TOMB OF DRACULA
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
25¢
21
JUNE
02143
THE TOMB OF DRACULA
VAMPIRE BATTLES VAMPIRE --IN A SINISTER DUEL OF THE UNLIVING!


Stan Lee PRESENTS
TOMB OF DRACULA!
MARV WOLFMAN / WRITER
GENE COLAN / ARTIST
TOM PALMER / INKER
JOHN COSTANZA / letterer
TOM PALMER / Colorist
ROY THOMAS / EDITOR
DEATHKNELL
ONE MOMENT BEFORE, THERE WAS SILENCE... A TURGID, UNEARTHLY QUIET WHICH QUICKLY ENDED WITH THE SNAPPED-ON DRUMMING OF MACHINERY.
AND DEEP WITHIN THE MUSKY WINDING CATACOMBS BENEATH THE TRANSYLVANIAN MOUNTAINS, THREE WRITHING FORMS FREEZE MOTIONLESS IN A BLINDING RAY OF SCARLET.
WE HAVE HUNTED YOU FOR YEARS NOW, DRACULA--
--AND NOW THAT YOU ARE PRISONER OF DOCTOR SUN...
...YOU SHALL NEVER LEAVE THESE CHAMBERS AGAIN!


SUDDENLY THE CHAMBER IS FILLED WITH YET ANOTHER SOUND--
--THE BONE-CHILLING PEAL OF LAUGHTER FROM ONE WHO IS ALREADY DEAD..
...LAUGHTER WHICH COMES NOT FROM HUMOR...
...BUT FROM IRONY.
AND IT IS A LAUGHTER WHICH CRIES, "YES, I MAY BE YOUR UNWILLING CAPTIVE, DOCTOR SUN--
"--BUT NEVER-- NEVER SHALL DRACULA BE ANYONE'S PRISONER."
AND IT IS A LAUGHTER WHICH CAN FREEZE THE BLOOD OF ANY SOUL--
--LIVING OR... UNDEAD!
YOU'RE AN ARROGANT FOOL, DRACULA-- YOU CAN'T DEFEAT DOCTOR SUN--
"DOCTOR SUN IS MORE THAN HUMAN... MORE THAN A VAMPIRE, DRACULA. HE IS EVERYTHING... EVERYWHERE... LISTEN, DRACULA, AND UNDERSTAND HOW YOUR ENEMY CAME TO BE...
CHINA, 1966. DURING THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION.
YOU ARE TO COME WITH US, DOCTOR SUN. THE GENERAL DEMANDS YOUR PRESENCE.
I PITY YOU, DOCTOR SUN-- WHAT THE GENERAL HAS PLANNED FOR YOU...
...IS A FATE MORE HORRIBLE THAN ANY SHOULD ENDURE.
AH, YOU ARE HERE. I AM SORRY, DOCTOR SUN, BUT THE GENERAL NO LONGER FEELS HE CAN TRUST YOU.
HE FEELS YOU HAVE STALLED THE TESTS TOO LONG. PERHAPS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS ON YOUR PART, HE BELIEVES.
SO THE GENERAL SAYS THAT YOU SHALL NOW BE THE TEST SUBJECT FOR PROJECT: MIND!


ALSO, AS FURTHER PUNISHMENT, DOCTOR SUN, THE GENERAL HAS ORDERED NO ANESTHETICS. HE WISHES YOU TO FEEL THE PAIN.
I DO NOT LIKE DOING THIS, DOCTOR SUN. BUT THE GENERAL DEMANDS MY SHOW OF LOYALTY.
FAREWELL, FATHER. I STILL LOVE YOU DEARLY.
HIS HEART HAS STOPPED.
QUICKLY NOW, THE INCISION.
CAREFUL, THERE MUST BE NO DAMAGE.
IT IS DONE--HIS BRAIN HAS BEEN REMOVED..
...AND PLACED INTO THE ANTI-MATTER RECEPTACLE BEFORE IT MISSES A CONTRACTION.
IF ALL HAS GONE WELL, MY COLLEAGUES, THE BRAIN WILL BEGIN FUNCTIONING IMMEDIATELY.
YES, IT WORKS.
NOW, LINK HIM IN WITH THE COMPUTERS. SOON THE STATE WILL KNOW ALL THE SECRETS DOCTOR SUN KEPT TO HIMSELF.
SOON WE WILL POSSESS KNOWLEDGE GREATER THAN ANY LIVING BEING HAS EVER KNOWN BEFORE...
...WHEN THE MOST BRILLIANT MIND IN ALL THE WORLD IS TIED IN WITH THE MOST ADVANCED COMPUTERS IN EXISTENCE.

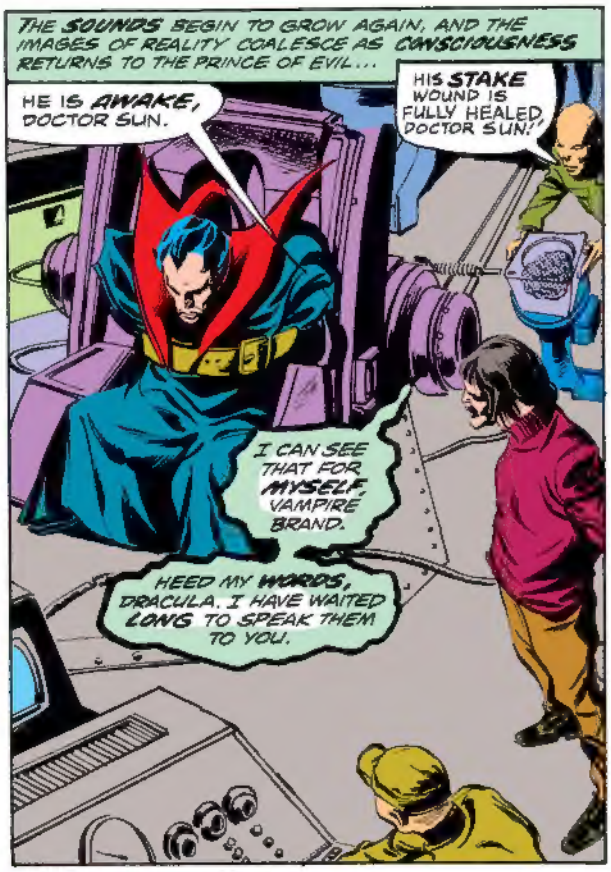
FOOLS! SUFFER NOW FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE, FOR WHEN YOU PLACED MY BRAIN IN CONTROL OF THE COMPUTERS--
YOU GAVE ME POWER... ABSOLUTE POWER!
POWER ENOUGH TO DESTROY YOU ALL!
ARRGGHHHHHH
SO, DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW, DRACULA? DO YOU SEE WHY HE IS UNDEFEATABLE?
AND WHY YOU WILL DIE IF YOU FAIL TO HEED HIS COMMAND?
ENOUGH RANTING, VAMPIRE BRAND. IT IS TIME TO SATISFY YOUR BLOOD HUNGER.
THE GIRL. TAKE HER. HER BLOOD IS WARM... RICH.
IF THAT IS WHAT YOU WISH, DOCTOR SUN... THAT IS WHAT SHALL BE DONE.
RACHEL VAN HELSING CAN NOT MOVE, AND WORSE, SHE KNOWS THIS. YET, EVEN AS THE DARKLING FORM HOVERS EVER CLOSER, SHE KNOWS SHE WILL NOT GO DOWN WITHOUT A STRUGGLE...
BUT...
YOU'LL NOT HAVE THIS WOMAN, VAMPIRE. SHE IS MEANT FOR ME.
YOU'RE FREE? BUT THE RAY HELD YOU IN PLACE.
I HAVE FREED HIM, VAMPIRE BRAND. FOR YOUR FINAL TEST.
DESTROY DRACULA-- DOCTOR SUN COMMANDS IT!

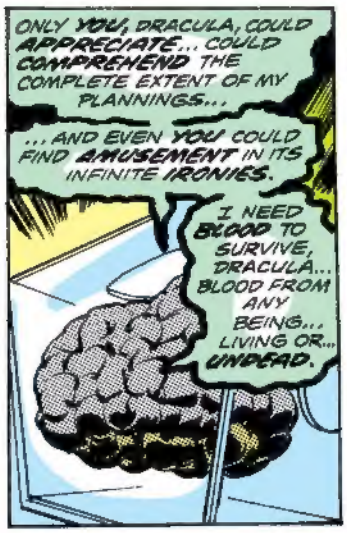
YOU'RE A MADMAN, SUN. NO FLEDGLING VAMPIRE WILL EVER BE MY MATCH--
--ESPECIALLY NOT ONE OF MY OWN CREATION.*
*TOMB OF DRACULA #11. --ROY.
SO HEED YOUR TRUE MASTER, BRAND-- CEASE YOUR BATTLING NOW!
DRACULA, LORD AND MASTER OF ALL VAMPIRES, COMMANDS IT!
YOU'RE THE LORD OF FOOLS, DRACULA.
I'VE BEEN BRED FOR ONLY ONE PURPOSE-- AND THAT'S TO HUMBLE YOU-- TO DEFEAT YOU, AND FINALLY TO DESTROY YOU!!
AND MAN, THAT'S JUST WHAT I'M GONNA DO.
FOR 500 YEARS I'VE DEFENDED WHAT IS MINE AGAINST INSIPID UPSTARTS SUCH AS YOU, BRAND--
FOR 500 YEARS I'VE CLAWED MY WAY PAST THE MINDLESS MINIONS WHO HAVE EVER SOUGHT TO TAKE WHAT IS MINE.
BUT NEVER SHALL MY LIEN BE TAKEN BY ONE SUCH AS YOU.
I AM LORD OF EVIL, LITTLE MAN-- FOREVER AND ALWAYS!
YOU TALK REALLY GOOD, 'BIG MAN'-- WHAT A SHAME YOU DON'T LIVE UP TO YOUR OWN PRESS RELEASES.
BUT I'VE BEEN FIGHTING ALL MY LIFE, TOO-- BEATING EVERY STINKING CRUMB WHO'S HAD MORE THAN I HAD--
--SO DON'T TELL ME ABOUT YOUR POWER, MAN--'CAUSE I'LL JUST RIP IT FROM YOU SO FAST IT'LL MAKE YOUR FANGS SPIN. DIG IT, MAN? DIG IT?

I'M NOT IMPRESSED BY YOU, 'BIG MAN'-- NOT IMPRESSED ONE LOUSY BIT. SO WHAT IF YOU'VE LIVED FIVE MILLION YEARS--
--YOU'RE STILL NOTHING, MAN--A TOTAL NOTHING!
'CAUSE YOU'LL HAVE NOTHING LEFT WHEN I'M DONE WITH YOU.
SPITTLLL!
FINISH HIM, BRAND. HESITATE NO LONGER.
I OBEY, DOCTOR SUN...
...WITH PLEASURE!
TWICE BEFORE WE'VE MET, VAMPIRE, BRAND--*
AFTER THIS NIGHT, WE SHALL NEVER BATTLE AGAIN...
...FOR IT SHALL BE YOUR ASHES WHICH ARE SCATTERED TO THE FOUR WINDS.
*ISSUE #'S 96/1. --RASCALLY.
ACKKK!
THUCK!
THEN YOU FORGET, 'BIG MAN'-- THE FIRST TIME WE TANGLED, I DEFEATED YOU.
I FORGET NOTHING ...NOTHING...NOTHING...
THERE IS A SINGLE SPASM OF STRENGTH WHICH FLOODS THROUGH THE PRINCE OF EVIL...
...ONE SINGLE SPASM WHICH PERMITS HIM TO STRIKE WITH FRENZIED VIOLENCE...AND THEN TO COLLAPSE WITHIN A KALEIDOSCOPE OF WHIRLING IMAGES AND BLOOD-LUSTING ILLUSIONS OF HORROR!

...ILLUSIONS SPAWNED BY THE EVER-PULSING BRAIN OF DOCTOR SUN.
LONDON, ENGLAND: FAR REMOVED FROM THE MADNESS BENEATH THE TRANSYLVANIA COMPLEX WHERE DRACULA NOW SPRAWLS UNCONSCIOUS...
...BUT A CITY WHICH IS UNALTERABLY ENMESHED IN THE DARKLING LORD'S BATTLEPLANS OF CONQUEST.
AGAIN I ASK YOU, MR. BLADE. PLEASE STAY. YOUR SERVICES ARE INVALUABLE!
SORRY, HARKER--BUT YOU PEOPLE PLAY A GAME OF WAITING. THAT'S NOT MY STYLE.
WE FIGHT WHEN WE ARE READY...
...WHICH IS USUALLY TOO BLASTED LATE TO DO ANY GOOD.
'SIDES, DRAC'S YOUR HANGUP. I'VE GOT MY OWN PROBLEMS--NAMELY A CERTAIN KILLER OF PREGNANT WOMEN.
IF YOU'RE REFERRING TO THE ONE WHO SLAYED YOUR MOTHER--
--HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY DEAD BY NOW.
YOU FORGET, HARKER--I'VE GOT SOME OF HIS BLOOD IN ME...
...AND THAT TELLS ME HE'S STILL AROUND... STILL SKULKING IN SOME STINKIN' DARK ALLEY SOMEPLACE.
AND NOW THAT YOU TELL ME I'M IMMUNE TO VAMPIRE BITES 'CAUSE'A HIM, WELL, THERE'S NO STOPPIN' ME.*
AND, MAN, WHEN I'M DONE WITH HIM, HE'S GOING TO BE ONE BLASTED UGLY CORPSE!
* AS SHOWN LAST ISSUE. --RESEARCHING ROY.
BUT...
NO BUTS, HARKER. I'M LEAVING, AND CALL OFF TAJ.
'CAUSE IF I HAVE TO, I'LL WALK RIGHT OVER HIM TO GET OUT OF HERE.
SO TAKE IT EASY, HARKER. IT HASN'T BEEN ALL BAD.

GOODBYE, MR. BLADE. GOD BE WITH YOU.
AND MAY YOU FIND THE PEACE YOU'VE SEARCHED SO DESPERATELY LONG FOR.

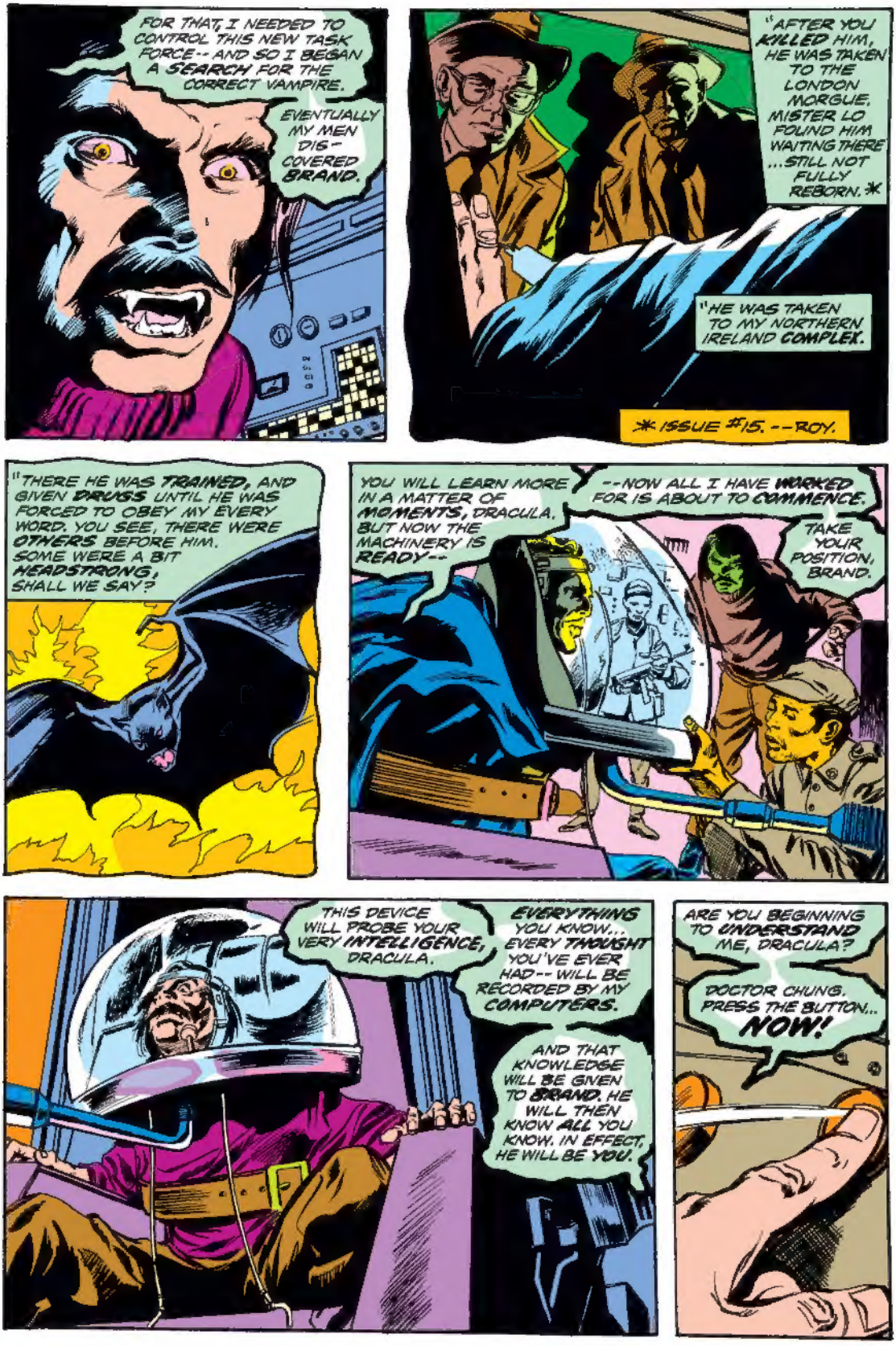

THE SOUNDS BEGIN TO GROW AGAIN, AND THE IMAGES OF REALITY COALESCE AS CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNS TO THE PRINCE OF EVIL...
HE IS AWAKE, DOCTOR SUN.
HIS STAKE WOUND IS FULLY HEALED, DOCTOR SUN!
I CAN SEE THAT FOR MYSELF, VAMPIRE BRAND.
HEED MY WORDS, DRACULA. I HAVE WAITED LONG TO SPEAK THEM TO YOU.


ONLY YOU, DRACULA, COULD APPRECIATE... COULD COMPREHEND THE COMPLETE EXTENT OF MY PLANNINGS...
...AND EVEN YOU COULD FIND AMUSEMENT IN ITS INFINITE IRONIES.
I NEED BLOOD TO SURVIVE, DRACULA... BLOOD FROM ANY BEING... LIVING OR... UNDEAD.

"IN ORDER FOR MY BRAIN TO CONSTANTLY FUNCTION, BLOOD MUST BE FOREVER PUMPED THROUGH THE MACHINERY ...BUT HOW ...WHERE DO I FIND A SUPPLY GREAT ENOUGH...? IT CAN NOT BE STOLEN. EVENTUALLY THE AUTHORITIES WOULD BECOME WISE.
"THUS I TURN TO ONE WHO KNOWS ALL ABOUT BLOOD... THE NIGHT SCAVENGER... YES, DRACULA-- THE VAMPIRE!

"HE HIDES IN THE SHADOWS UNTIL HE FINDS HIS VICTIM...
"...THEN HE STRIKES AS A DEADLY WRAITH FROM HELL ITSELF!

"HERE IS MY SOURCE OF BLOOD, DRACULA-- THE PERFECT UNDERLING-- WHO CAN LEAVE NO TRACE... HAVE NO TRUE MOTIVE OUTSIDE OF HIS OWN ALMOST UNQUENCHABLE BLOOD-THIRST.
"BUT, HE WOULD ATTACK FOR ME... BRING ME HIS VICTIM'S BODIES-- TAKING ENOUGH BLOOD FOR HIMSELF TO BUT SURVIVE... NOTHING MORE.


FOR THAT, I NEEDED TO CONTROL THIS NEW TASK FORCE -- AND SO I BEGAN A SEARCH FOR THE CORRECT VAMPIRE.
EVENTUALLY MY MEN DIS-COVERED BRAND.
"AFTER YOU KILLED HIM, HE WAS TAKEN TO THE LONDON MORGUE. MISTER LO FOUND HIM WAITING THERE ...STILL NOT FULLY REBORN. *
"HE WAS TAKEN TO MY NORTHERN IRELAND COMPLEX.
* ISSUE #15. --ROY.
"THERE HE WAS TRAINED, AND GIVEN DRUGS UNTIL HE WAS FORCED TO OBEY MY EVERY WORD. YOU SEE, THERE WERE OTHERS BEFORE HIM. SOME WERE A BIT HEADSTRONG, SHALL WE SAY?
YOU WILL LEARN MORE IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS, DRACULA. BUT NOW THE MACHINERY IS READY--
--NOW ALL I HAVE WORKED FOR IS ABOUT TO COMMENCE.
TAKE YOUR POSITION, BRAND.
THIS DEVICE WILL PROBE YOUR VERY INTELLIGENCE, DRACULA.
EVERYTHING YOU KNOW... EVERY THOUGHT YOU'VE EVER HAD -- WILL BE RECORDED BY MY COMPUTERS.
AND THAT KNOWLEDGE WILL BE GIVEN TO BRAND. HE WILL THEN KNOW ALL YOU KNOW. IN EFFECT, HE WILL BE YOU.
ARE YOU BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND ME, DRACULA?
DOCTOR CHUNG. PRESS THE BUTTON... NOW!

THERE IS A SUDDEN CRACKLE AS STATIC FILLS THE AIR AS NERVE IMPULSES ARE TORN APART AND THEN INTEGRATED INTO COMPLEX CIRCUITRY AND WIRES..

..AND THEN THERE IS A SUDDEN SCREAM AS DRACULA HAS HIS VERY CONSCIOUSNESS SHREDDED, RIPPED AND FINALLY PIECED TOGETHER INTO ALMOST MEANINGLESS FRAGMENTS.

BUT ABOVE ALL THE SHRIEKING SOUNDS, THERE IS AN ALMOST MOCKING MECHANICAL LAUGHTER WHICH FILLS IN THE FINAL MISSING DETAILS OF A CAREFULLY CONCEIVED MASTERPLAN!

HEAR IT ALL NOW, DRACULA-- AND UNDERSTAND AT LAST!

I KNEW YOU WOULD NEVER LISTEN TO MY COMMANDS, YET ONLY YOU CONTROLLED ALL THE UNDEAD.. ONLY YOU WERE MASTER OF ALL VAMPIRES!

THUS THE VAMPIRE I HAD TO CREATE HAD TO BE MORE THAN YOUR EQUAL-- MORE CUNNING THAT YOU EVER WERE. HE WOULD HAVE TO KNOW ALL YOU KNOW AND THEN MORE--

--AND HE WOULD HAVE TO TURN YOUR KNOWLEDGE AGAINST YOU--

--HE WOULD HAVE TO DESTROY YOU, AND FINALLY CLAIM THE LORDSHIP OF VAMPIRES FOR HIMSELF, WITH YOUR DEATH'S HEAD AS HIS SCEPTRE

THAT IS CORRECT, DRACULA. I HAVE BEEN BREEDING YOUR SUCCESSOR-- THE ONE WHO WILL RULE ALL THE UNDEAD..

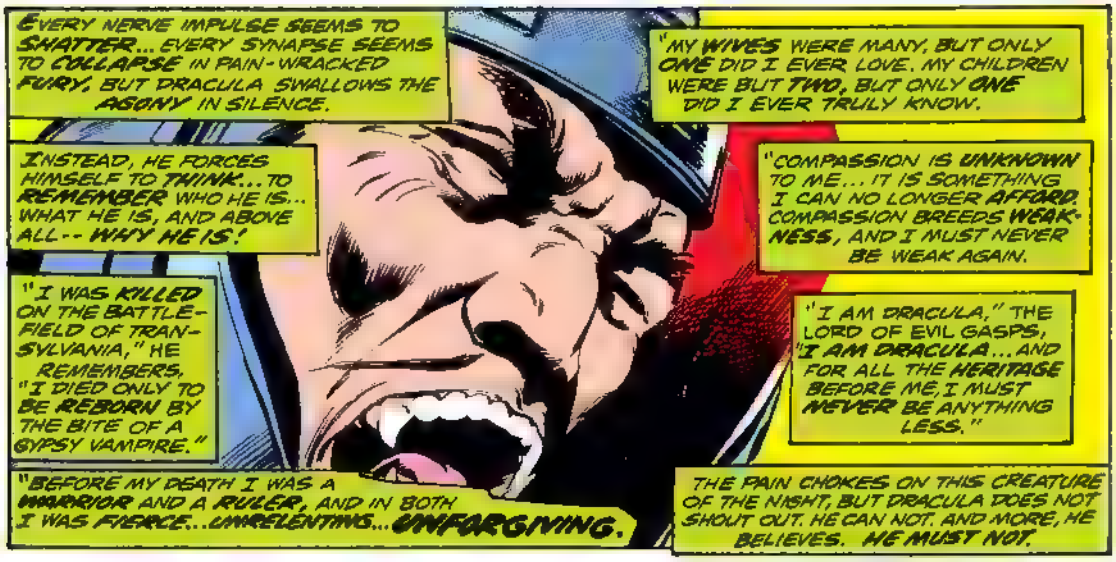
. IN THE NAME OF DOCTOR SUN.

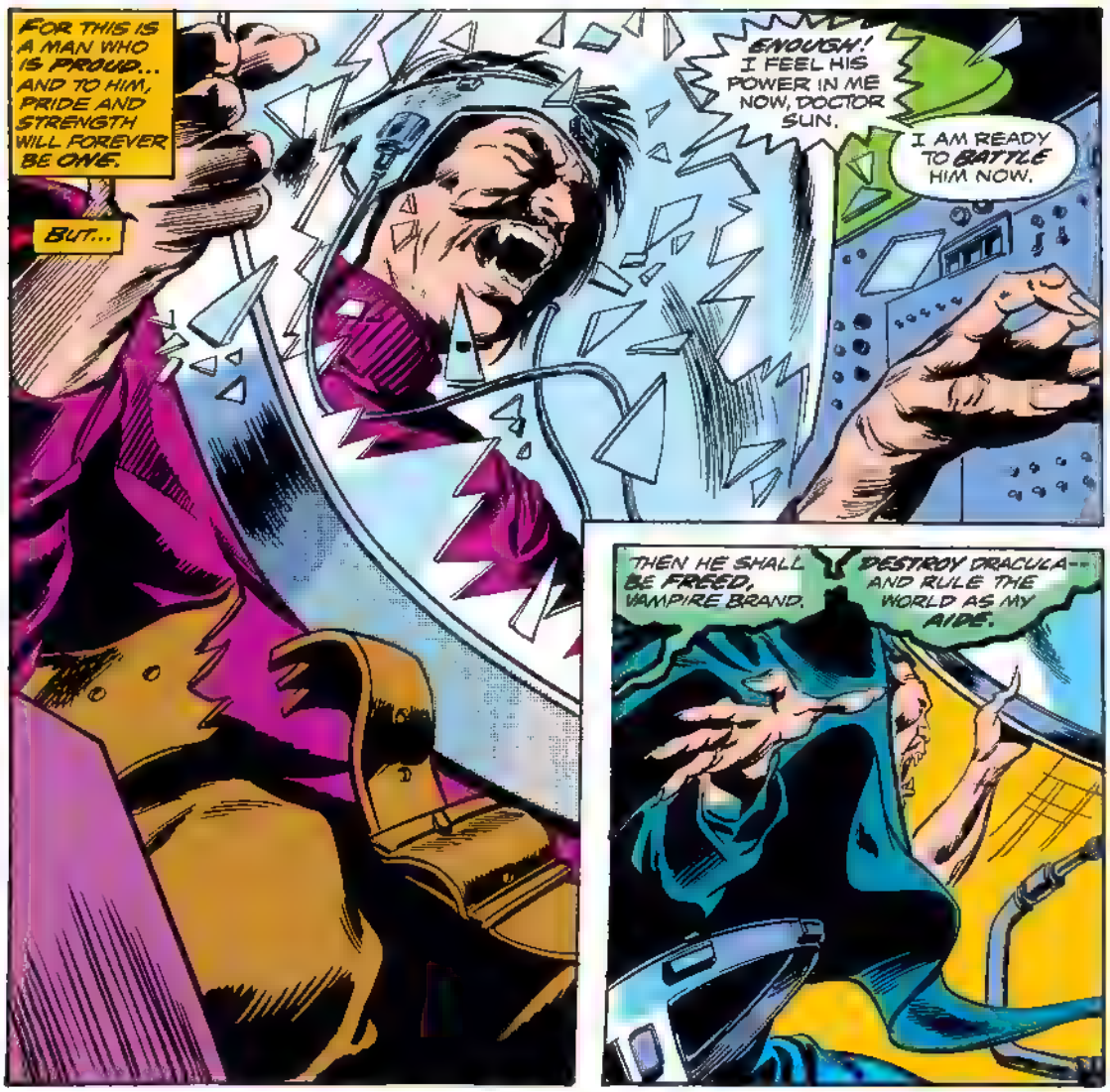
DO YOU SEE THE IRONY OF IT ALL, DRACULA? YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE WILL CAUSE YOUR DESTRUCTION--

-- AND GIVE ME CONTROL OVER EVERY LIVING AND DEAD BEING ON THE EARTH ITSELF.

HE WILL SUPPLY ME NOT ONLY WITH THE BLOOD I NEED TO SURVIVE--

--BUT WITH AN INVINCIBLE ARMY WITH WHICH TO EVENTUALLY RULE THE WORLD ITSELF!

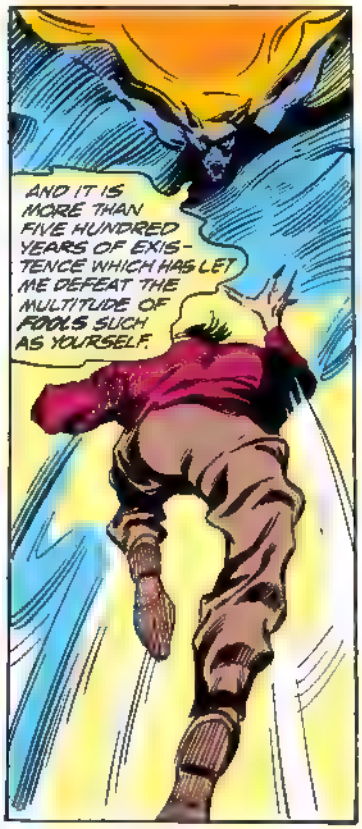

EVERY NERVE IMPULSE SEEMS TO SHATTER... EVERY SYNAPSE SEEMS TO COLLAPSE IN PAIN-WRACKED FURY, BUT DRACULA SWALLOWS THE AGONY IN SILENCE.
"MY WIVES WERE MANY, BUT ONLY ONE DID I EVER LOVE. MY CHILDREN WERE BUT TWO, BUT ONLY ONE DID I EVER TRULY KNOW.
INSTEAD, HE FORCES HIMSELF TO THINK... TO REMEMBER WHO HE IS... WHAT HE IS, AND ABOVE ALL -- WHY HE IS!
"COMPASSION IS UNKNOWN TO ME... IT IS SOMETHING I CAN NO LONGER AFFORD. COMPASSION BREEDS WEAKNESS, AND I MUST NEVER BE WEAK AGAIN.
"I WAS KILLED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF TRANSYLVANIA," HE REMEMBERS, "I DIED ONLY TO BE REBORN BY THE BITE OF A GYPSY VAMPIRE."
"I AM DRACULA," THE LORD OF EVIL GASPS, "I AM DRACULA... AND FOR ALL THE HERITAGE BEFORE ME, I MUST NEVER BE ANYTHING LESS."
"BEFORE MY DEATH I WAS A WARRIOR AND A RULER, AND IN BOTH I WAS FIERCE... UNRELENTING... UNFORGIVING.
THE PAIN CHOKES ON THIS CREATURE OF THE NIGHT, BUT DRACULA DOES NOT SHOUT OUT. HE CAN NOT. AND MORE, HE BELIEVES. HE MUST NOT.


FOR THIS IS A MAN WHO IS PROUD... AND TO HIM, PRIDE AND STRENGTH WILL FOREVER BE ONE.
BUT...
ENOUGH! I FEEL HIS POWER IN ME NOW, DOCTOR SUN.
I AM READY TO BATTLE HIM NOW.
THEN HE SHALL BE FREED, VAMPIRE BRAND.
DESTROY DRACULA-- AND RULE THE WORLD AS MY AIDE.

GET YOUR GUARDS OUTTA HERE, DOCTOR SUN-- I WON'T NEED 'EM ANYMORE
FACT IS, I DON'T NEED ANYTHING ANYMORE.
MY MIND'S BEEN SUDDENLY OPENED... EXPANDED BEYOND BELIEF, MAN--
IT'S AS IF THERE IS NOW NOTHING I CAN'T DO. NOTHING!
YOU'VE STILL TO BATTLE ME, BRAND. CLAIM NOTHING UNTIL I AM DEFEATED.
IF YOU CAN DEFEAT ME, THAT IS.

CAN'T MAN, I KNOW ALL YOUR TRICKS NOW. I KNOW THE WAY YOU MOVE... THE WAY YOU FIGHT.
I KNOW HOW YOU THINK, DRAC
AND EVEN MORE, DRAC-- I KNOW ALL YOUR WEAKNESSES... AND YOUR FEARS.

FEARS? YES, THERE ARE THINGS EVERYONE MUST FEAR.
BUT MINE NEVER ENTER INTO BATTLE, BRAND. NOW, COME FORWARD. IT IS TIME YOU LEARN THAT IT IS MORE THAN KNOWLEDGE THAT MAKES ME A DRACULA.

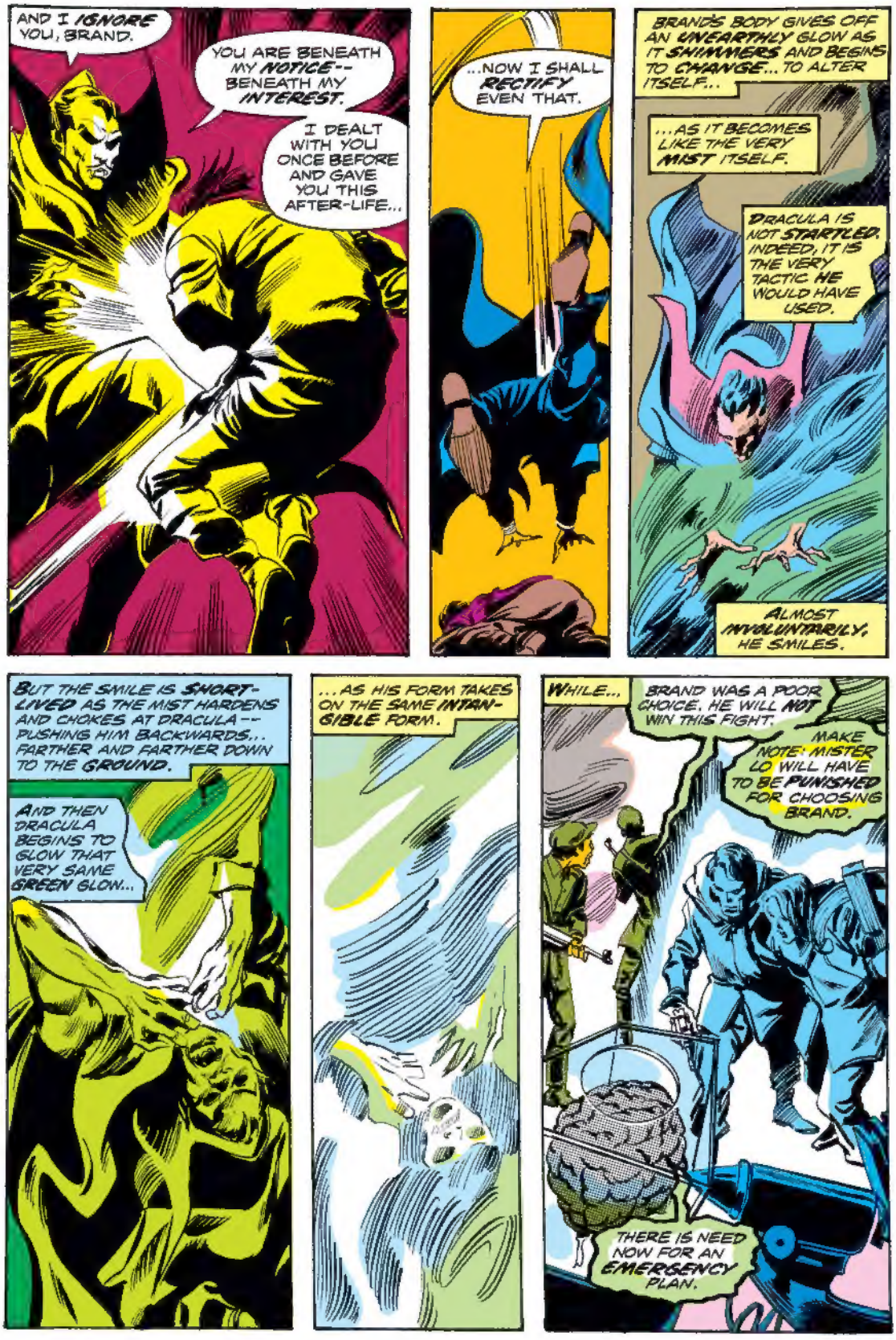

AND IT IS MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED YEARS OF EXISTENCE WHICH HAS LET ME DEFEAT THE MULTITUDE OF FOOLS SUCH AS YOURSELF.

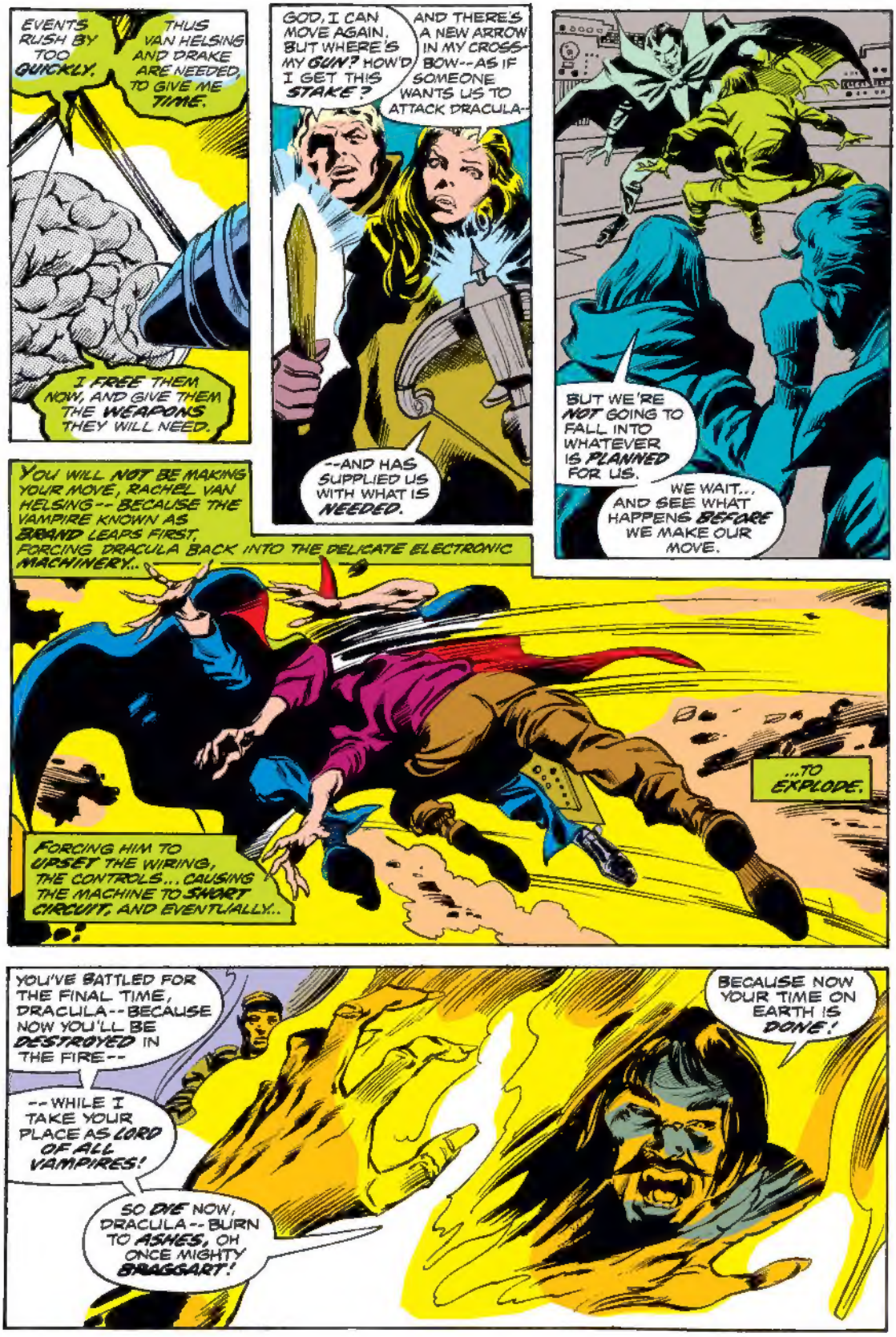
BRAND STUMBLES. HE KNOWS ALL OF DRACULA'S TACTICS-- BUT HE HAS NONE OF THE MAN-BAT'S SPEED. . NONE OF THE LORD OF EVIL'S QUICK CUNNING.
AND SO DRACULA IS FREE... FREE TO HUNT. FOR THE THIRST WHICH GROWS WITHIN HIM NEEDS SATING.

SCIENTIST CHU IS HIS TARGET THIS NIGHT. A MAN, SIXTY-TWO YEARS OLD. HIS WIFE IS DEAD; SHE DIED WHEN THE COMMUNISTS OVERRAN CHINA. HE HAS NO CHILDREN, NO LEGACY, NO VALUE TO MANKIND.
FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, ALL HE HAS HAD IS HIS LOYALTY AND LOVE FOR DOCTOR SUN.
BAM

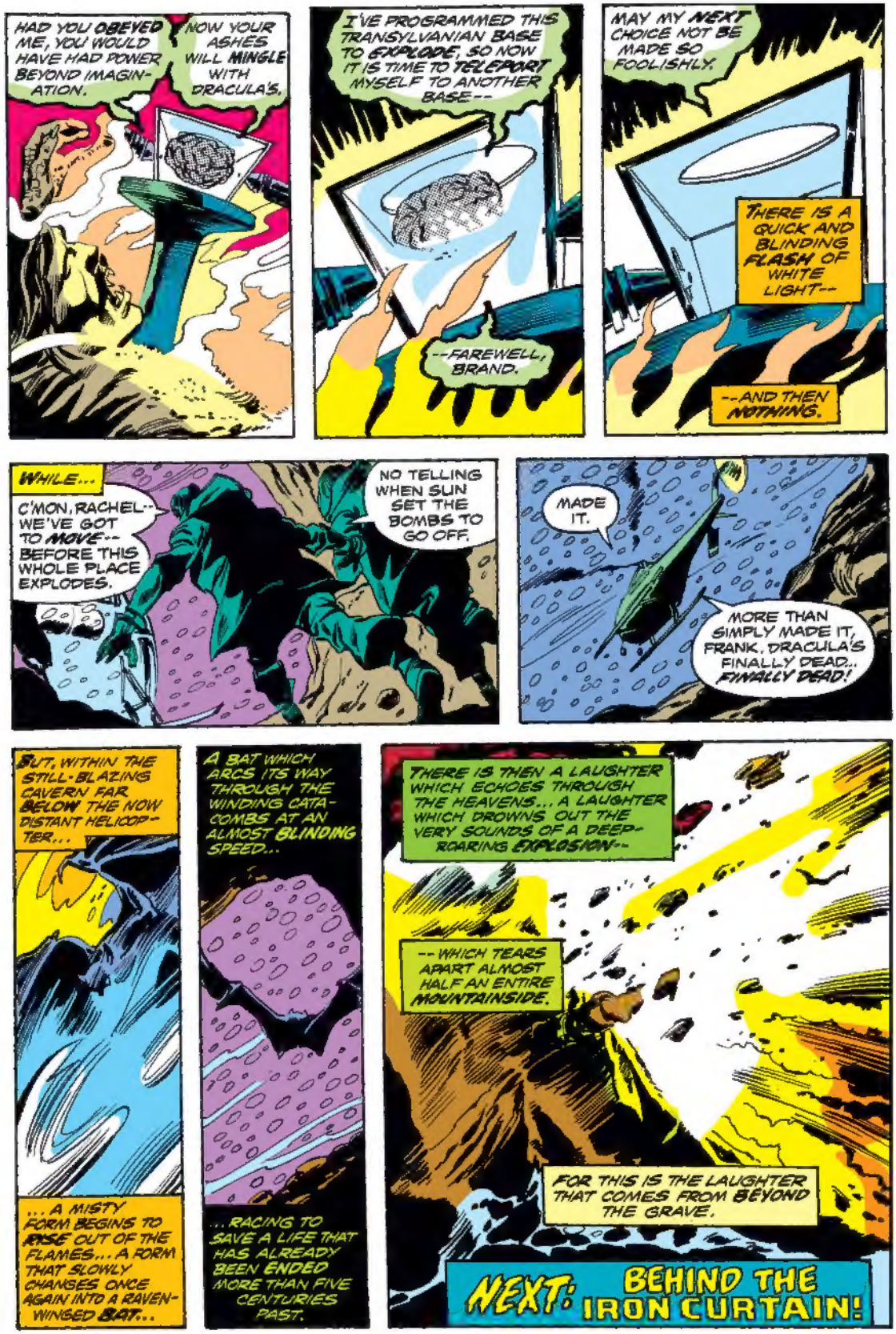
NOW HE NO LONGER HAS EVEN THAT.
YOU ARE CLEVER, MAN--
BUT THAT WON'T HELP YOU-- NOT ONE LOUSY BIT
DO YOU HEAR ME, MAN? DO YOU HEAR ME?!?

I HEAR YOU
AGGHHHH!


AND I IGNORE YOU, BRAND.
YOU ARE BENEATH MY NOTICE-- BENEATH MY INTEREST.
I DEALT WITH YOU ONCE BEFORE AND GAVE YOU THIS AFTER-LIFE...
...NOW I SHALL RECTIFY EVEN THAT.
BRAND'S BODY GIVES OFF AN UNEARTHLY GLOW AS IT SHIMMERS AND BEGINS TO CHANGE... TO ALTER ITSELF...
...AS IT BECOMES LIKE THE VERY MIST ITSELF.
DRACULA IS NOT STARTLED. INDEED, IT IS THE VERY TACTIC HE WOULD HAVE USED.
ALMOST INVOLUNTARILY, HE SMILES.
BUT THE SMILE IS SHORT-LIVED AS THE MIST HARDENS AND CHOKES AT DRACULA -- PUSHING HIM BACKWARDS... FARTHER AND FARTHER DOWN TO THE GROUND.
AND THEN DRACULA BEGINS TO GLOW THAT VERY SAME GREEN GLOW...
...AS HIS FORM TAKES ON THE SAME INTANGIBLE FORM.
WHILE...
BRAND WAS A POOR CHOICE. HE WILL NOT WIN THIS FIGHT.
MAKE NOTE: MISTER LO WILL HAVE TO BE PUNISHED FOR CHOOSING BRAND.
THERE IS NEED NOW FOR AN EMERGENCY PLAN.


EVENTS RUSH BY TOO QUICKLY.
THUS VAN HELSING AND DRAKE ARE NEEDED, TO GIVE ME TIME.
I FREE THEM NOW, AND GIVE THEM THE WEAPONS THEY WILL NEED.
GOD, I CAN MOVE AGAIN. BUT WHERE'S MY GUN? HOW'D I GET THIS STAKE?
AND THERE'S A NEW ARROW IN MY CROSS-BOW--AS IF SOMEONE WANTS US TO ATTACK DRACULA--
--AND HAS SUPPLIED US WITH WHAT IS NEEDED.
BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO FALL INTO WHATEVER IS PLANNED FOR US.
WE WAIT... AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE WE MAKE OUR MOVE.
YOU WILL NOT BE MAKING YOUR MOVE, RACHEL VAN HELSING -- BECAUSE THE VAMPIRE KNOWN AS BRAND LEAPS FIRST, FORCING DRACULA BACK INTO THE DELICATE ELECTRONIC MACHINERY...
...TO EXPLODE.
FORCING HIM TO UPSET THE WIRING, THE CONTROLS... CAUSING THE MACHINE TO SHORT CIRCUIT, AND EVENTUALLY...
YOU'VE BATTLED FOR THE FINAL TIME, DRACULA -- BECAUSE NOW YOU'LL BE DESTROYED IN THE FIRE--
-- WHILE I TAKE YOUR PLACE AS LORD OF ALL VAMPIRES!
SO DIE NOW, DRACULA -- BURN TO ASHES, OH ONCE MIGHTY BRAGGART!
BECAUSE NOW YOUR TIME ON EARTH IS DONE!

AND NOW, FRANK DRAKE--I SHALL END YOUR LIFE, TOO--
--PERMITTING DRACULA AT LEAST TO HAVE ONE FINAL PLEASANT THOUGHT AS HE IS BURNED TO HIS ASHES.
GIVE ME THE STAKE, YOU'VE NO NEED FOR IT--
--NOR WILL YOU NEED YOUR CROSSBOW, VAN HELSING.
YOU DIDN'T EXPECT ME TO LET YOU LIVE NOW, DID YOU?
NOW, BEFORE I DESTROY YOU TWO, THERE IS ONE OTHER I WISH TO SPEAK WITH.
I'VE BEEN GIVEN DRACULA'S KNOWLEDGE, DOCTOR SUN--BEEN GIVEN HIS STRENGTHS, HIS PROWESS--
--EVEN HIS INTELLIGENCE.
I NOW KNOW ALL I NEED TO RULE THE WORLD MYSELF. I'VE NO NEED OF YOU, SUN--
--AND I'VE NO DESIRE TO WORK FOR YOU.
WHICH MEANS, I MUST DESTROY YOU.
YOU ARE FAR TOO GREAT A RISK TO BE LEFT ALIVE.
INDEED, YOU ARE A FOOL, BRAND. DID YOU BELIEVE YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE TO BE GIVEN DRACULA'S THOUGHTS?
I POSSESS THEM NOW, TOO--
AND I KNEW THAT HIS ARROGANCE WOULD BE YOURS AS WELL--AND THAT ONCE YOU POSSESSED IT, YOU WOULD REFUSE TO WORK FOR ME.
BUT, AS ALWAYS, I AM PREPARED AGAINST INSUBORDINATION.
ZITTT!


HAD YOU OBEYED ME, YOU WOULD HAVE HAD POWER BEYOND IMAGINATION.
NOW YOUR ASHES WILL MINGLE WITH DRACULA'S.
I'VE PROGRAMMED THIS TRANSYLVANIAN BASE TO EXPLODE, SO NOW IT IS TIME TO TELEPORT MYSELF TO ANOTHER BASE--
--FAREWELL, BRAND.
MAY MY NEXT CHOICE NOT BE MADE SO FOOLISHLY.
THERE IS A QUICK AND BLINDING FLASH OF WHITE LIGHT--
--AND THEN NOTHING.
WHILE...
C'MON, RACHEL-- WE'VE GOT TO MOVE-- BEFORE THIS WHOLE PLACE EXPLODES.
NO TELLING WHEN SUN SET THE BOMBS TO GO OFF.
MADE IT.
MORE THAN SIMPLY MADE IT, FRANK. DRACULA'S FINALLY DEAD.. FINALLY DEAD!
BUT, WITHIN THE STILL-BLAZING CAVERN FAR BELOW THE NOW DISTANT HELICOPTER...
...A MISTY FORM BEGINS TO RISE OUT OF THE FLAMES... A FORM THAT SLOWLY CHANGES ONCE AGAIN INTO A RAVEN-WINGED BAT...
A BAT WHICH ARCS ITS WAY THROUGH THE WINDING CATACOMBS AT AN ALMOST BLINDING SPEED...
...RACING TO SAVE A LIFE THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN ENDED MORE THAN FIVE CENTURIES PAST.
THERE IS THEN A LAUGHTER WHICH ECHOES THROUGH THE HEAVENS... A LAUGHTER WHICH DROWNS OUT THE VERY SOUNDS OF A DEEP-ROARING EXPLOSION--
--WHICH TEARS APART ALMOST HALF AN ENTIRE MOUNTAINSIDE.
FOR THIS IS THE LAUGHTER THAT COMES FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE.
NEXT: BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN!